

ENR California

2024 California Best Projects

Award of Merit, Government/Public Building: The Otay Mesa Land Port of Entry (LPOE) Modernization and Expansion Project



Photo by Tom Bonner

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The Otay Mesa Land Port of Entry (LPOE) Modernization and Expansion Project

San Diego

Award of Merit

Submitted by: Hill International Inc.

Owner: The U.S. General Services Administration

Lead Design Firm: Gruen Associates

General Contractor: Atkinson/Clark Construction

Construction Manager as Agent: Hill International Inc.

Subcontractors: Southland Industries; Helix Electric; Syska & Hennessy Group

As the second-busiest commercial crossing on the U.S.-Mexico border, the Otay Mesa LPOE processed an estimated \$13.5 billion in exports and \$37.4 billion in imports in 2021. The facility was originally built in 1983 and required expansion and modernization to accommodate increasing traffic. A 9.9-acre lot east of the LPOE was acquired for the expansion.

This \$141-million design-build project was a multiphase undertaking on a heavily secured facility used by multiple federal agencies. Scope included five new buildings, the renovation of three buildings, new inspection booths and more than 70,000 cu yd of highway-grade concrete pavement. Completed in October 2023, the project doubled inspection capacity, improved circulation, reduced wait times and allowed for a dedicated return lane to Mexico for trucks denied entry into the U.S.

In accordance with their design excellence program, GSA envisioned a sustainable project. Efficient envelopes and glazing help reduce energy usage, while reused or sustainably sourced building materials proved cost effective, durable and easy to maintain. The facility features canopies with solar panels to capture energy and provide shade. A bioretention and stormwater filtration system treats surface water runoff.

By successfully implementing these features, the team achieved LEED Gold and SITES Silver certifications.

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